of the 4th and final round of the meeting of preparatory committee of UNCED held in USA earlier;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the strategy finalised by India after mobilising both G-77 nations and sympathetic industrialised nations to oppose any move by the industrialised West to use Trade Policy as weapon or instrument for global environment management or to introduce any new conditionalities on account of environmental considerations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) A Conference of SAARC Environment Ministers was held at New Delhi on April 8-9, 1992 to deliberate upon the issues related to the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

(b) A copy of the Joint Communique issued at the end of the deliberations is placed in Parliament Library for kind perusal of Hon'ble Members.

(c) The G-77 nations, including India, are of the view that the developed countries should not attempt to impose unilateral restrictions on international trade, in particular on natural resources and products thereof on environmental grounds, or to any new conditionalities on account of environmental considerations.

Environmental Pollution

1784. SHRI BHADRESWAR BURAGOHAIN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is large scale open-cast mining in the coal fields of upper Assam which are causing wide-spread environmental pollution and wanton destruction of paddy fields;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to check the same;

(c) whether Government have discussed this matter with the Ministry of Coal; and

(d) if so, what is their reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (d) Based on the represenations received from various groups and organisations, this Ministry had constituted an Expert Committee in 1988 to examine the environmental implications of open-cast mining projects of Coal India Limited near Patkai and Namsik Hills in Assam. The Committee submitted its report in March, 1989. Consequently the matter was taken up with the Department of Coal and Coal India Limited and open-cast mining operations at Tikak mines were stopped from April, 1990. Also mitigative measures for pollution control and restoration of the degraded areas due to mining have been suggested.

Global Environment Facility

1785. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Group of 77 (G-77) developing countries has recently demanded a firm commitment from the developed countries on the management of the GEF (Global Environment Facility);

(b) whether there was also a proposal for the third World Environment Project Fund; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?